

REMARKS

Claims 34-47, 49-73, 75-99, 101-126 and 128-137 are pending in this application. By the Amendment, claims 34, 44, 49, 54, 58, 60, 75, 80, 84, 86, 97, 101, 106, 110, 112, 123, 128, 132 and 136 are amended and claims 48, 74, 100, 127 and 138-157 are canceled. Support for the amendments to independent claims 34, 60, 86 and 112 can be found, for example, in original claims 48, 74, 100 and 127 and dependant claims 44, 49, 54, 58, 75, 80, 84, 97, 101, 106, 110, 123, 128, 132 and 136 are amended to reflect the amendment of their respective independent claims. No new matter is added. Reconsideration based on the above amendments and the following Remarks is respectfully requested.

I. Claims Define Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 34-47, 50-73, 76-99, 102-126 and 129-157 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,031,537 to Hugh (Hugh). Claims 138-157 are canceled, rendering the rejection of those claims moot. As to the remaining claims, the rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Office Action indicates that claims 48, 74, 100 and 127 contain allowable subject matter. Claims 34, 60, 86 and 112 have been amended to include the allowable features of previous claims 48, 74, 100 and 127. Accordingly, claims 34, 60, 86 and 112 are allowable. Claims 35-47, 49-59, 61-73, 75-85, 87-99, 101-111, 113-126 and 128-137 depend variously from 34, 60, 86 and 112 and thus are also allowable. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

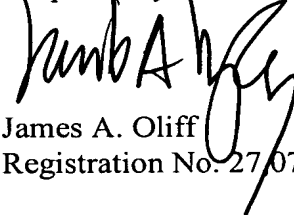
Claims 49, 75, 101 and 128 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,031,537 to Hugh (Hugh) in view of U.S. Patent 6,138,116 to Kitagawa et al (Kitagawa). Claims 49, 75, 101 and 128 depend variously from allowable claims 34, 60, 86 and 112 and thus are also allowable. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of the pending claims are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully Submitted,


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